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MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER I.—IN MY LADY'S CHAMBER.

It is an hour short of midnight, and the depth of winter. The morrow is Christmas Day. Mirk Abbey bears snow everywhere; inches thick upon its huge broad coping-stones; much even on its sloping roof, save on the side where the north wind makes fitful rushes, and, wolf-like, tears and worries the white fleeces. Mirk woods sway mournfully their naked arms, and grind and moan without; the ivy taps unceasingly against the pane, as though entreating shelter. The whole earth lies cold and dead beneath its snow-shroud, and yet the snow falls and falls, flake by flake, soft and noiseless in its white malice, like a woman's hate upon her rival.

It hides the stars, it dims the moon, it dulls the murmur of the river to which the Park slopes down, and whose voice the frost has striven in vain to hush these three weeks. Only the Christmas-bells are heard, now faint, now full—that sound more laden with divine regret than any other that falls on human ear. Like one who, spurring from the battle-field, proclaims 'The fight is ours, but our great chief is slain!' there is sorrow in that message of good tidings; and not only for pious Christian folk; in every bosom it stirs some sleeping memory, and minds it of the days that are no more. No wonder, then, that such music should touch my Lady's heart—the widowed mistress of Mirk Abbey. Those Christmas-bells, which are also wedding-bells, remind her doubtless of the hour when Sir Robert lifted her lace-veil aside, and kissed her brow before all the people in the little church by the sea, and called her for the first time his Wife. He will never do so more. He has been dead for years. But what of that? Our dead are with us still. Our acts, our dealings with the world, form but a portion of our lives; our thoughts still dwell with those dear ones who have gone home before us, and in our dreams they still are our companions. My Lady is not alone in her private chamber, although no

human being is there besides herself. Her eyes are fixed upon the fire, and in its flame she sees a once-loved face invisible to others, whose smile has power to move her even to tears. How foolish are those who ascribe romance to Youth alone—to Youth, that has scarcely learned to love, far less to lose! My Lady is five-and-forty at the least, although still comely; and yet there are memories at work within that broad white brow, which, for interest and pathos, outweigh the fancies of a score of girls. Even so far as we—the world—are acquainted with her past, it is a strange one, and may well give her that thoughtful air.

Lady Lisgard, of Mirk Abbey, has looked at life from a far other station than that which she now occupies. When a man of fortune does not materially increase his property by marriage, we call the lady of his choice, although she may have a few thousand pounds of her own, 'a girl without a sixpence.' But Sir Robert Lisgard did literally make a match of this impecunious sort. Moreover, he married a very 'unsuitable young person;' by which expression you will understand that he was blamed, not for choosing a bride very much junior to himself, but for not selecting her from the proper circles. When accidentally interrogated by blundering folks respecting her ancestry, the baronet used good-humouredly to remark, that his wife was the daughter of Neptune and Thetis. When asked for her maiden name, he would reply drily: 'She was a Miss Anna Dyomene;' for the simple fact was, that she had been thrown up almost at his feet by the sea—the sole survivor of a crowded emigrant-ship that went to pieces before his eyes while he was staying one stormy autumn at a sea-side village in the South. Lashed to a spar, she came ashore one terrible night in a costume similar to that worn by Miss Menken in *Mazeppa*; and on the occasion in question, she made at least an equal sensation. There was a subscription got up among some visitors of fashion

to supply her with a wardrobe; and they do say that Sir Robert Lisgard's name is still to be seen set down with the rest for five pounds in the list that is kept among the archives of the village post-office.

But it was not until three years afterwards that he bought her a *trousseau*; for the baronet, intending to make her his wife not only in name—a companion for life, and not a plaything, which is prized so long as it is new, and no longer—caused Lucy Gavestone, during the greater part of that interval, to be educated for her future position. If it was madness in him, as many averred, to marry so far beneath him, there was much method in his madness. Not ashamed of her as a bride, he was resolved not to be ashamed of her as the mistress of his house, or as the mother of his children, if it should please Heaven to grant him issue. It was in France, folks said, that her Ladyship acquired those manners which subsequently so excited the envy of the midland county in which she lived. She bore the burden of the honours unto which she was not born as gracefully as the white rose in her blue-black hair. But to perform her loving duties as a mother, in the way even her enemies admitted that she did perform them, could scarcely have been learned in France. Only love and natural good sense could have taught her those. Never once had Sir Robert Lisgard cause to regret the gift which the sea had given him. He used, however, smilingly to remark, in his late years—and his words were not without their pathos then—that he wished that he could have married his Lucy earlier, and while he was yet a young man; but in that case she would have been fitter for the font than the altar, inasmuch as there was a quarter of a century between their respective ages. He always averred that five-and-twenty years of his manhood had been thrown away.

But good wife and matron as Lady Lisgard had been, she was no less excellent a widow and mother. If Sir Robert could have risen from that grave in Mirk churchyard, where he had preferred to lie, rather than in the family vault, so that she might come to visit him in his lonely sleep, and daily lay a flower or two, culled with her own hands, upon him—not perhaps unconscious of that loving service—he would have found all things at the Abbey as he would have wished them to be during life: that is, so far as she could keep them so. Sir Richard, their eldest son, was within a few months of his majority, and, of course, had become in a great degree his own master; not that he misused his years so as to place himself in opposition to his mother, for he was a gentleman above everything; but he was of a disposition more haughty and stern than her kindly nature could well cope with, and she nervously shrank from any contest with it, although, on a question of principle—which, however, had not occurred—she might have braved even him.

Walter Lisgard, the younger son, was as genial and good-humoured as his father before him, and although (in common with every one who knew her) I loved and respected my Lady, it must be confessed that he was too openly his mother's favourite, as he was the favourite of all at Mirk, in the Abbey or out of it.

Lastly, there was Letty Lisgard—but she shall speak for her sweet self. While her mother sits and thinks before her fire, there is a knock at the chamber-door, and on the instant the picture

in her brain dissolves, which was affecting her so deeply, and she has no eyes save for her only daughter. A girl of seventeen enters the room, not gaily, as would have become her age, but with a certain gentle gravity that becomes her at least as well, since it is impossible to imagine that she could look more lovely. Fair as a lily, but not pale, for her usually delicate colour is heightened by some mental emotion, which causes, too, the little diamond cross upon her bosom to rise and fall, and the hazel eyes to melt and glitter beneath their dark lashes; lithe and tall as a sapling wooed too roughly by the north wind, she glided in, with her fair head slightly bowed, and casting herself upon her knees beside my Lady, exclaimed: 'Ah, do not weep, dear mother—do not weep!' at the same time herself bursting into a passion of tears. 'I knew what you would be thinking of,' continued she, 'upon this sad night, and therefore I came to comfort you a little, if I could. If not a merry Christmas, let me at least wish you a happy one, my own dear mother. I am sure that if dear papa can see us now, he wishes you the same.'

'Yes, dearest Letty, that is true. How thoughtful and kind it was of you to leave your friend—breaking off, no doubt, some pleasant chat over school-days—'

'Nay, mother,' interrupted the girl; 'what is Rose to me in comparison with you? Was it likely that I should forget this anniversary of our common loss!'

Lady Lisgard did not answer in words, but shedding by the wealth of golden brown hair that had fallen over her daughter's forehead, she kissed that pure brow tenderly. Upon her own cheeks, a crimson flush, called thither by the young girl's words, was lingering yet. Reader, happy are you if you have never known a loving voice say: 'What are you thinking of, dearest?' expecting to receive the answer: 'Of you,' when you have no such reply to give—when your mind has been wandering far from that trustful being, and perhaps even whither it should not have wandered. Such a flush may then have visited your cheeks, as now touched those of Lady Lisgard, although it is certain that memory never played her so false as to remind her of aught whereof she need have been ashamed. The fact was, she had not been thinking of Sir Robert at all, albeit it was upon that very day, five years back, that she had received from his failing hand its last loving pressure, and in that very room. Human nature cannot be trained like those wondrous mechanical inventions of the monks, that indicated the fasts and festivals of the church so accurately—to suffer or rejoice at particular times and seasons; we are often sad when the jest is upon our lips, and bear a light heart beneath the sackcloth. Lady Lisgard's thoughts had, Heaven knew, been far from merry ones; but because she had not been mourning with chronological propriety, her woman's heart unjustly smote her with a sense of want of fealty to the memory of him for whom she still wore—and intended to wear to her dying day—the visible tokens of regret.

It is the fashion to jeer at widows; but, to a reverent mind, there are few things more touching than that frequent sight in honest England—a widowed mother, whose only joy seems to be in what remains to her of her dead lover, husband, counsellor—his children; and the only

grief that has power to wring whose heart, past sense of common pain through the dread anguish that it has once undergone, arises from their misfortunes and misdoings. Ah, selfish boy, beware how you still further burden that sorrow-laden soul!—ah, thoughtless girl, exchange not that faithful breast too hastily for one that may spurn your head in the hour of need!

My Lady—for that was what we always called her about Mirk—was neither more nor less fortunate with her children than most mothers. They all three loved her; but they did not all love one another. Between Sir Richard and Walter was only a year of time, but upon it had arisen a thousand quarrels. The former thought that the privilege of an elder brother was a divine right, extending over every circumstance of fraternal life; the latter conceived it to be an immoral institution, borrowed in an evil hour from the Jews, and one to be strictly kept within its peculiar limits—themselves more than sufficiently comprehensive—the inheritance of the family title, and the succession to the landed estates.

'Where are Richard and Walter, Letty?' asked Lady Lisgard, breaking a long silence. 'They, too, have been always mindful, like yourself, of this sad day.'

'They are mindful still, dear mother. I hear Walter's foot in the corridor even now.'

A swift elastic footfall it was, such as is very suggestive of the impulsive nature of him who uses it; for a phlegmatic man may move swiftly on rare occasions—such as bayonets behind him, or a mad bull—but there will be no more elasticity in his gait, even then, than in that of a walking-doll; whereas every step of Captain Walter Lisgard had a double action, a rise and fall in it, independent of the progressive motion altogether.

He was of a slim, yet not delicate build; his every movement (and, as I have said, there was plenty of it) had a native grace like that of a child; childlike and trustful, too, were those blue eyes; soft in their expression as his sister's, while he stooped down to kiss his mother's cheek, scarce more smooth than his own. Upon his lip, however, was a fairy moustache, which being, fortunately, coal-black like his somewhat close-cropped hair, made itself apparent to all beholders, and rescued his comeliness from downright effeminacy. But no woman ever owned a softer voice, or could freight it with deeper feeling than Walter Lisgard.

'God bless you, dearest mother, and give you all the good you deserve!' murmured he tenderly.

'And God bless you, my darling!' answered Lady Lisgard, holding him at the full distance of her white and round arms, clasped with two costly jewels, which had a worth, however, in her eyes far beyond their price, being Sir Robert's wedding-gift. 'Ah me! how you remind me of your father's picture, Watty, taken on the day when he came of age. I trust you will grow up to be like him in other respects, dear boy.'

'I hope so, mother; although,' added he, with a sudden petulance, 'there will be a vast difference between us in some things, you know. He was an only son, whereas I am not even an eldest one; and when I come of age, there will be no picture taken, nor any fuss made, such as is to happen in June, I hear, upon Richard's majority.'

'Walter, Walter!' exclaimed Lady Lisgard reprovingly, 'this is not like yourself, for it's envious—and—and—covetous!'

'At all events, it is very foolish, mother,' interrupted the young man drily; 'for what can't be cured must be endured.'

'And very, very cruel to me,' added Lady Lisgard.

'Then I am sincerely sorry I spoke,' returned Walter hastily, the moodiness upon his features chased away at once by loving regret. 'Only, when a fellow leaves his regiment to spend Christmas-eve at home—as I am sure I was delighted to do, so far as you and Letty were concerned—he does not want to find there another commanding officer, uncommissioned and self-appointed' . . .

'Walter, Walter! this is very sad,' broke in Lady Lisgard piteously: 'you know what is Richard's manner, and how much less kind it is than his true meaning. Can you not make some allowance for your own brother?'

'That's exactly what I said to him, mother,' answered Walter, laughing bitterly. 'Here have I just got my troop, with no more to keep myself on than when I was a cornet, and had no back debts to speak of; and yet, so far from helping me a little, as Richard might easily do, by making some allowance for his own brother, he complains of that which you are so good as to let me have out of your own income. Why, that's not his business, if it were twice as much—although, I am sure, dear mother, you are liberality itself. Has he not got enough of his own—and of what should be mine and Letty's here, by rights—without grudging me your benevolences? Is he not Sir Richard Lisgard of Mirk Abbey?'

'I will not listen to this, Walter,' cried his mother sternly. 'This is mere mean jealousy of your elder brother.'

'Oh, dear no, mother; indeed, it is not that,' answered the young man coldly. 'I envy him nothing. I hold him superior to me in no respect whatever; and that is exactly why I will not submit to his dictation. Here he comes stalking along the gallery, as though conscious that every foot of oak belongs to him, and every picture on the wall.'

It was undoubtedly a firm determined step enough—unusually so, for one so young as Sir Richard. The face of the new-comer, too, was stern almost to harshness; and as he entered the room, and beheld Walter standing by his mother's side, his features seemed to stiffen into stone. A fine face, too; more aristocratic if not so winning as his younger brother's, and not without considerable sagacity: if his manner was not graceful, it had a high chivalric air about it which befitted his haughty person very well. When he taught himself submission (a rare lesson with him), as now, while he raised his mother's fingers to his lips, and kissed them with dutiful devotion, it would have been hard to find a man with a more noble presence than Richard Lisgard.

'A merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you, mother.' The words, though conventional, had an earnest kindness, which came from the heart. Lady Lisgard kissed him fondly.

'Thank you, dear Richard,' said she; 'but, alas! no Christmas can be a merry one, no year a happy one, when I see my children disagree.'

'Ah, Master Walter has been here before me, I see,' quoth Sir Richard bitterly, 'stealing, like Jacob, his mother's blessing from her first-born, and giving his own account of matters. But please now to listen to my version.'

'Not to-night, Richard,' exclaimed Lady Lisgard with deep emotion. 'Let not to-night, sacred to the memory of your common father, be a witness to your mutual accusations. In this room, almost at this very hour, but a few years back, he died, bequeathing you with his last breath to my tenderest care. Here it was that you kissed his white lips, weary with prayers for your future welfare; here it was that you promised, in return, to be good and dutiful sons. I know—I think, at least—that you both love your mother. No, I will kiss neither of you while thus unreconciled. That was not all that he required of you: he would have bidden you, could he have looked forward to this evil time, to love one another also; and O Richard! O Walter! hark to those bells, that seem to strive to beat their message into the most stubborn ears. Do you not hear what they say?—Letty, dear, do you tell them, then, for there are no lips better suited to deliver it.'

The young girl lifted up her head from her mother's lap, to gaze into her eyes; then, with exquisite pathos and softness, repeated, like a silver peal of bells: 'Peace and good-will, peace and good-will, peace and good-will to all mankind.'

Sir Richard looked at his brother fixedly, but no longer in wrath. 'It is my part to make the first advance,' said he, 'although I was not the first to quarrel;' and he frankly stretched forth his hand.

The other paused a second; then reading on his mother's anxious lips: 'For my sake, Walter,' he grasped his brother's fingers. There was grace in the very delay, as in the motion tenderness and genial ease, but scarcely the warmth of reconciliation. It was more like the action of a woman who wishes to please; and if you had seen the small hand apart from its owner, as it lay with its one glittering ring half hid in the other's huge white palm, you would have said it was a woman's hand.

CHAPTER II.—THE WAITS.

Once more my Lady is alone, except for her companion-thoughts, which are, however, no longer of a distressing nature. The reconciliation of her boys has gladdened her to the core; she thinks, she trusts at least, that the truce will be a lasting peace. As for Letty, she is all that a mother's heart could wish her to be. If much is lost to my Lady, surely much remains. With the Poor, one misery is removed only to bring another into greater prominence; but with the Rich, this is not so. Only let the disease be cured, or the quarrel be made up, which is at present vexing them, and all, for a time at least, is sunshine. Even not to be cold, not to be hungry, is something; and not to have to take thought of the morrow is a great deal. From her warm and curtained chamber, Lady Lisgard looks forth into the night. The snow falls as fast as ever, now straight, now aslant, now whirled in circular eddies by the bitter north. Through its thick and shifting veil, she can scarcely see the old church-tower of Mirk, though it stands close by within the very garden-grounds of the Abbey; nor the windmill which crowns Mirkland Hill, and on moonlit nights stands up so clear against the sky, a beacon to all the country round. It was weather which those who are armed against it call 'Seasonable'; and some of the tender sex, who have a fire lit in their rooms before they rise, and go out in seal-skin, and travel with foot-warmers,

even go so far as to call 'Delightful.' At all events, it is such as is pleasant to watch from within for a few moments, and then to return to one's fire-side with enhanced satisfaction.

There are merry-makings in the kitchen to-night, as befits the season, and my Lady's maid has been enjoined not to hurry herself. Her mistress is beginning to unrobe, without her assistance, but very leisurely. She unclasps one warm and sparkling jewel from her arm, and gazes thoughtfully, but far from sadly, upon the picture that is hid within it. It is the miniature of a handsome man past middle age, attired in a blue coat and gold buttons; what persons of my Lady's age would call a decidedly old-fashioned portrait; but it is the likeness of Sir Robert as her bridegroom. 'What a good, kind husband he was,' thinks she. 'How he loved me, and loaded me with favours; how much he overlooked, how much he forgot—of which others know nothing—for my sake. How terrible would it be to feel that one had not done one's poor duty in return for so much love. Thank Heaven, I feel free from any such charge. If I had not love—that is, first love—to give him in exchange, I gave him all I had. I gave him genuine affection, esteem—worship. Everybody knows that; and what is better, my own heart knows it. It never beat with truer fealty towards him than it beats to-night. God knows. I live for his children only. What a fine noble boy is Richard grown; surely, to look upon him, and to say to one's self: "This is my son," should be happiness enough for any mother. True, he is proud; but has he not something to be proud of? He, Sir Richard, and one of those Lisgards who have ruled at Mirk for twelve generations. (Here a quiet smile stole over my Lady's features.) They said with reason at those *tableaux* at the Vane's, that with that helmet on he was the image of young Sir Maurice, who died at Edgehill with the colours twisted round him. I wonder if it was his poor mother who had her dead boy painted so. 'Tis certain that she thought: "Ah, were he but alive, there would be no such thing as sorrow more for me." Yet here I have him. Ah (here she grew as pale as death), why did I ever let my Walter be a soldier? What weakness to give way—to the very peril of him for whom I was so weak! He would have gone to the wars themselves but for good Dr Haldane, through whom (thanks to the Duke) he was not gazetted to the corps he had applied for. Why did he not choose the bar, like his elder brother? How he would have moved men's hearts to mercy with that winning tongue! Or why did he not become God's messenger—I am sure he has an angel's face—and carry the news those bells are telling of to shipwrecked souls? Oftentimes, when, as a child, he knelt beside me to say his prayers, his very looks have seemed to make the action more sacred. Goodness seemed better worth when he was praying for it, and heaven no home for saints unless he shared it! God grant he may grow up a good man!

'Then Letty, too—what mother's wealth must I possess since that sweet girl is not the chief of it, the central jewel of my crown? When matched with others of her age—with this Rose Aynton, for example—how bright and fair she shews! Not but that Rose is a good girl, doubtless; accomplished, too, beyond her years, and far beyond her opportunities—she sparkles like a crystal cut in

ten thousand facets; but my own Letty is the flawless diamond, bright and pure as light itself. What blessings are these three! May Heaven keep them always as I deem them now. I wish my Walter were a little less impulsive; but the darling boy is young. As for dear Richard, I have no fears for him. The proud lad will find some noble helpmate, meet to— Great Heaven! what is that?

A burst of melody without fell suddenly upon the midnight air, and at the same moment the chamber-door opened to the touch of Mistress Forest, her Ladyship's confidential maid. 'I beg your pardon, my Lady, if I startled you; but I knocked twice, and could not make you hear.'

'It was not you, Mary, that startled me,' returned Lady Lisgard; 'it was the sudden music. The Christmas Waits, as I suppose?'

'Yes, my Lady. They came up from the village a little while ago, and have been staying in the servants' hall for the clock to strike twelve.'

'I trust they have all had supper?'

'You may be sure of that, my Lady. Mrs Welsh is as openhanded (with your Ladyship's property) as any cook in the county; nor is George Steve a likely man to sit thirsty while he sees others drink. One would think that a public-housekeeper should have drinking enough at home; but—pardon, my Lady—I am making complaints which, however just, I know you dislike to hear, and besides, I am interrupting the carol.'

Earthly friends will change and falter,

Earthly hearts will vary;

He is born that cannot alter,

Of the Virgin Mary.

Born to-day—

Raise the lay;

Born to-day—

Twine the bay.

Jesus Christ is born to suffer,

Born for you—born for you;

Holly, strew:

Jesus Christ was born to conquer,

Born to save—born to save;

Laurel, wave:

Jesus Christ was born to govern,

Born a king—born a king;

Bay-wreaths, bring:

Jesus Christ was born of Mary,

Born for all. Well befall Hearth and Hall.

Here the manly but not unmelodious voices exchanged their verse for prose, if Christmas good-wishes can be said to be mere prose. 'A merry Christmas and a happy New Year to your Ladyship, and many on 'em!'

Lady Lisgard moved to the window with a smile, and drawing the curtain aside, threw up the sash. On the white lawn beneath, stood five dark figures, bearing various instruments of music, and one a huge horn lantern, the light of which glinted upon the laurels. It was impossible to recognise the features of the rest, as they stood, cap in hand, notwithstanding the still driving snow, awaiting her Ladyship's reply; but she addressed them each by name nevertheless.

'Mr Steve, I thank you kindly. Henry Ash, I am glad to find you in good voice again. John Lewis and Peter Stone—if I am not mistaken. Neighbours and friends all, I thank you very much. But it is a cold night for caroling, and I hope you have been taken care of within. A merry Christmas to you and a happy New Year.' There was a

tremor in my Lady's voice, although she spoke with such particularity, which shewed how deeply she was moved.

'God bless your Ladyship,' returned the voices, disorderly as to unison, but each one of itself distinct and clear as fire-firing.—'God bless Sir Richard, and send him a fair bride.—God bless Master Walter's handsome face.—God bless Miss Letty.'

Lady Lisgard closed the window, but as she did so, dropped the heavy curtain between herself and the lighted chamber, so that she could still look out, but without being seen. The curtain, too, cut her off from the observation of her maid within. 'Who is the fifth man that bears the lantern, Mary?' asked her Ladyship in a tone of carelessness very unsuited to the expression of her face, which all in a moment had grown pinched and terror-stricken, as though it hungered for some reply that it yet dreaded to hear.

'Nobody as you know, my Lady—nor indeed as I know, for the matter of that. He's a stranger in these parts, who's putting up at the *Lisgard Arms*. He only came for a few days last week, walking across the country for all the world like a pedler—a way he says he learned in foreign parts; but Steve with his odd ways has taken his fancy, so that he stays on. A very well-spoken sort of person he is too, although the sea, it seems, has been his calling, which is a rough trade. However, he has made it answer—according at least to Mr Steve. Any way, he flings his money about free enough, and indeed is what I call rather too fond of treating folks. He is good company himself, they say, and a favourite with everybody he comes across, which is a very dangerous thing—that is,' added Mistress Forest, correcting herself, 'unless one is a gentleman, like handsome Master Walter.'

'You don't—remember—this—this person's name, Mary, do you?' asked Lady Lisgard.

'No, strange to say, I don't, my Lady; although but a moment ago it was on the tip of my tongue. It is something like Hathaway.'

A trace of colour once more returns to my Lady's cheek, and her breath, which, by reason perhaps of the confined space in which she stands, has seemed to be stifled during the narration of her maid, now comes and goes with a little less of effort.

'That is his voice, I reckon, my Lady—yes, I thought so—and the new carol which he has been teaching the choir.'

O'er the hill and o'er the vale

Come three kings together,

Caring nought for snow and hail,

Cold, and wind, and weather;

Now on Persia's sandy plains,

Now where Tigris swells with rains,

They their camels tether.

Now through Syrian lands they go,

Now through Moab, faint and slow,

Now o'er Edom's heather.

'Ah, now I've got it, my lady,' cried Mistress Forest triumphantly. 'It isn't Hathaway. He's the man they were talking of in the servants-hall as has just bought the windmill of old Daniels, and that was how I confused them. The stranger's name is Derrick—a Mr Derrick.'

My Lady's dimpled hand flew to her heart, and would have pressed against it had she had any strength to do so. Her limbs, however, were nerveless, and shook as if she had the ague. But for the

window-seat, she must have dropped; and as it was, leaned, huddled up against it, a shapeless form, decked in gray satin and pearls indeed, but as unlike my Lady as those poor wretches whom we strangle for a show are unlike themselves, who seem to lose, the instant that the fatal bolt is drawn, all fellowship with the human, and become mere bundles of clothes. The drop had fallen, and without warning, from under Lady Lisgard's feet, but unhappily the victim was conscious, and not dead.

MARTIAL LAW.

MARTIAL LAW in England is of very great antiquity, and, until quite modern times, derived its authority from the sovereign, part of whose prerogative it was to frame special rules, distinct from the general law of the land, for the governance and regulation of the royal forces.

Under the Saxon kings, military affairs were taken in hand by the dukes of districts, who were elected by the people, and appear to have exercised their authority without reference to the royal power; but at the Norman Conquest, when the feudal system was introduced, the sovereign, as commander-in-chief, was the source of military authority, which he might exercise as he deemed fit over all his subjects, or, if more convenient, only towards those who were attending him in his wars, or were in open rebellion against him.

The power which the sovereign himself could wield, he could also delegate, and, as a matter of fact, he did depute his two great lieutenants to administer martial law for him. These two officers were the Lord High Constable and the Earl Marshal. They sat together, and one apart from the other did not constitute a valid tribunal. What guided them in giving judgment on the cases brought before them is not known. It is certain they were not bound by any statute of the realm, but they probably were guided by the usage or customary law of armies—something applicable to military persons, akin to that *lex non scripta*, or common law, which was and is equally binding as the statute law upon all subjects whatever.

Though, as regarded feudal soldiers actively employed, the jurisdiction of the Constable and Marshal could have been exercised only during the six weeks for which military tenants were bound to serve at one time, yet in a warlike age, when every institution, political or social, was strongly imbued with a military spirit, disputes not referrible to the law of the land must constantly have arisen, which came appropriately under the cognizance of the Court of Chivalry. Besides, there were to be disciplined and restrained those mercenary troops, which so early as the reign of Henry II. began to be employed instead of the feudal warriors, who commuted their personal service in the field for a money-payment of so much a shield. Of the martial law applicable to these soldiers, the Constable and the Marshal were the exponents, for it seems to have been the custom, preparatory to an actual war, for the kings of this realm, with the advice of the Constable and Marshal, to make a book of rules and orders for the guidance of the army; and this book of rules and orders, together with the penalties provided for breakers of discipline, was the declaration of martial law for that particular expedition. One of these books, made in the ninth year of Richard II., and which purports to have

been compiled by the advice of the Duke of Lancaster and other noblemen, is still extant.

The functions of the Constable and Marshal were ministerial and judicial. It behoved them to see to the ordering and equipment of the army, and, in a judicial capacity, to hear and determine charges of murder committed in parts beyond sea, to settle the rights of prisoners of war, and to try soldiers for offences committed against the laws and rules of the army.

The Court of Chivalry was a permanent one, and administering, as it did, with so little of ascertained law, and with so much of discretionary power, it is not surprising that it should have overstepped its limits, and, as the vehement complaints against it asserted, have arrogated the functions of the regular civil tribunals. Accordingly, we find that in the eighth year of Richard II., it became necessary to curb the power of the court. The statute 8 Rich. II. c. 5, recites: 'Also because divers pleas concerning the common law, and which by the common law ought to be examined and discussed, are now newly drawn before the Constable and Marshal of England, to the great damage and disquiet of the people;' and then enacts, that from henceforth common-law offences shall be tried by the common law.

But this declaration was too general to cure the evil. Possibly through ambition, probably through ignorance, the Court of Chivalry continued to hear causes which should have been heard by the civil courts; so the 13 Rich. II. stat. 1, c. 2, was passed, to define more particularly the province of this court. The preamble recites the necessity for the act: 'Also, because that the Commons have grievously complained that the court of the Constable and Marshal hath encroached to itself, and daily doth encroach, contracts, covenants, trespasses, debts and detinues, and many other actions pleadable at the common law, in great prejudice of the king and of his courts, and to the great grievance and oppression of the people;' the enacting clause then goes on to declare, that 'to the court it pertaineth to have cognizance of contracts touching deeds of arms, and of war out of the realm; and also of things that touch arms or war within the realm which cannot be determined nor discussed by the common law.'

These were the first limits fixed upon the acknowledged prerogative of the king to create and administer martial law, of which it was not pretended to fix the bounds in its application to purely military persons; and it is to be observed that the prerogative of the king, so far as that extended to places beyond sea, was left unabridged and undefined, apparently on purpose. Within the realm, the Marshal's Court was to deal only with such 'things that touched arms or war' as were not determinable by the common-law courts; but without the realm, the royal prerogative was to continue as before, creating and administering martial law according to its discretion, or it might be its indiscretion; and this prerogative was recognised at a much later date, when the earlier Mutiny Acts, abridging the authority of the crown at home, declared that neither 'the acts, nor anything contained in them, should extend to abridge' this branch of the prerogative in parts beyond sea.

After these restrictions had been imposed on the Court of Chivalry, its power drooped and declined. The king or his commanders administered martial law in the field according to the book of which

mention has been made, or according to the usage of war and the justice of particular cases; and it was in virtue of such law that the Duke of Exeter caused Bardolph to be hanged for stealing what his friend Pistol described as a 'pyx of little price.' The former occupation of the court was almost gone; it busied itself with questions as to the right of persons to coats of armour, bearings, crests, and pennants, and decided disputes about precedence, place, and dignity. 'Poor Edward Bohun,' the Duke of Buckingham who perished 'under device and practice,' in the reign of Henry VIII., was the last High Constable of England. After his death, the office was not continued, and though the Earl Marshal—whose office is hereditary in the family of the Dukes of Norfolk—did at times hold his court after the abolition of the Constable's office, his doing so was looked upon as an illegal thing, and a ground of complaint, which was stopped by statute under Charles I.

Now, although the above-named limits were put upon the martial prerogative of the crown, and although the twenty-ninth chapter of the Great Charter, as ratified by Henry III., said: 'No freeman shall be taken or imprisoned, or be disseised of his freehold or liberties, or free customs, or be outlawed or exiled, or any otherwise destroyed; nor will we pass upon him, nor condemn him, but by lawful judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land'—it is quite obvious that in order to restrain the licence of soldiers from hurting other people, and to keep them under such discipline as alone would make them useful, it was necessary that, as regarded them at least, special laws should be laid down, and the general statutes be suspended. There was always a small permanent military force to garrison places like the Tower of London, Dover, Portsmouth, Berwick, Calais, and some others of importance; and for this force a military law had to be made. A military law was also needed for the discipline of troops serving on the Scotch and Welsh Marches, a law which was alluded to in the letter written by order of Henry VIII. to Sir Ralph Ewer, when Alderman Reed of London was sent to that general to be employed as a private soldier against the Scots, because he had refused to contribute to the 'benevolence' which Henry exacted from the city. The letter states the circumstances under which Reed was sent down, and enjoins upon Sir Ralph the necessity of using him 'in all things according to the sharpe discipline militar of the northern wars.' It was also necessary to bring under 'discipline militar' those persons who, for the preservation of the internal peace of the kingdom, were compelled by Henry II.'s Assize of Arms, and afterwards by the Statute of Winchester under Edward I., to keep arms according to their estate and degree, and who were called out for active service under the king's commissions of array, which commissions were addressed to particular persons in the counties, and directed them to muster and array in military order the inhabitants of the district, either for the purpose of quelling some domestic rebellion, or resisting invasion from abroad.

For the permanent garrisons, the king's prerogative made a law, as it did for armies serving abroad and for subjects beyond sea; but for the levies made under commissions of array, the extent to which they were to be deprived of the benefits of the common and statute law was defined by the commission of array itself; the form of which

was settled by parliament in the fifth year of Henry IV., 'so as to prevent the insertion therein of any new penal clauses.'

Notwithstanding, however, all these restraints upon martial law, it was not declared by any statute that under no circumstances should it be lawful for the king, without consent of parliament, to proclaim and enforce martial law within the home limits of his kingdom. Custom, and the spirit of such statutes as have been named, would seem to shew that, though the prerogative might exist, it was not expected to be exercised. Special provision was made for quelling domestic disturbances, and in times of serious rebellion, it was so evidently for the common weal that an arbitrary power should be possessed by the head of the state, that no one would be found to object to it; the freedom of the country from foreign invasion, excepting perhaps from Scotland, which was provided for, however, by the 'sharp discipline militar of the northern wars,' had not given occasion for the exercise of the royal prerogative, which went into desuetude in this particular, until the time came when it was needlessly revived, and then the people put an end to it by statute.

Mary executed some of the rebels who followed Sir Thomas Wyatt by martial law, though Wyatt himself was tried for his treason before a jury; and Elizabeth, excusably enough considering the Spanish Armada was under-weight for England, issued a proclamation, declaring that such as brought into the kingdom or dispersed papal bulls, or traitorous libels against the queen, should with all severity be proceeded against by Her Majesty's lieutenants or their deputies by martial law, and suffer such pains and penalties as they should inflict. Seven years afterwards, she directed Sir Thomas Wilford, because of some tumults that had taken place in and round London, and 'for that the insolency of many desperate offenders is such that they care not for any ordinary punishment by imprisonment,' to suppress speedily 'some such notable rebellious persons by execution to death, according to the justice of martial law.'

James I., though he ordered a man to be hanged on his own responsibility, on the occasion of his coming for the first time into his new kingdom, does not appear to have been unbearably offensive in the exercise of his prerogative as martial law-giver; but Charles I., who staked his crown upon the question whether he, or the parliament and he, were invested by the constitution with the power of the sword, rendered the imposition of martial law upon his growingly sensitive subjects so intolerable, that it was not any longer to be borne.

The seventh chapter of the Petition of Right recites the protecting statutes, including Magna Charta, and says that nevertheless commissions had issued under His Majesty's Great Seal, directing certain persons 'to proceed within the land according to the justice of martial law.' The eighth chapter asserts that certain people had in consequence been put to death, who, 'if by the laws and statutes of the land they had deserved death, by the same laws and statutes also they might, and by no other ought to have been judged and executed;' and the tenth chapter prays 'that the aforesaid commissions for proceeding by martial law may be revoked and annulled; and that hereafter no commissions of like nature may issue forth to any person or persons whatsoever to be executed as aforesaid.'

Thus the prerogative, in its branch of martial-law giving, was taken away, and the Great Rebellion breaking out upon the question, 'In whom is the power of the sword?' nothing was done till after the revolution of 1688 in the way of providing a national army, and laying down rules for its government. By the 13 Car. II. c. 6, the king's sole right to command the militia was declared, but nothing was done to legalise martial law, which, within the realm, had been done away with by the Petition of Right.

Charles II. kept five thousand regular troops, who were paid out of his private purse; and James II. kept thirty thousand, though there was no warrant for a standing army in England, and the spirit of the constitution was against it. Feudal tenures not having been abolished till the twelfth year of Charles II., the feudal tenants were the only constitutional army at the king's disposal. Charles I. summoned them in 1640, the last time that they were called out.

The sixth clause of the Bill of Rights declares 'that the raising or keeping a standing army within the kingdom in time of peace, unless it be with consent of parliament, is against law;' and this, coupled with the declaration against martial law in the Petition of Right, effectually restrains the crown from doing military violence within the realm.

A standing army was, however, found to be an institution necessary 'for the safety of the United Kingdom, the defence of Her Majesty's crown, and the preservation of the balance of power in Europe,' as the Mutiny Act for the current year declares; and on the occasion of some *émeute* among the troops, caused by emissaries of James II., William III. applied to parliament for authority to punish the men by martial law. The first Mutiny Act was accordingly passed in the first year of William and Mary, authorising the sovereign to levy troops, and to govern them according to martial law; as contained in the act, and to be declared by Articles of War, which the king was authorised to make.

The Mutiny Act, which has been renewed ever since, remains in force for a year only. Without its authority, a standing army is illegal, because of the Petition of Right and the Bill of Rights, which are merely suspended in this particular temporarily, by the Mutiny Act. It is therefore of necessity that parliament should meet at least once a year, to authorise the levy of an army, the exercise of martial law, and to provide the means of paying the troops. The militia, as now constituted, was first authorised by act of parliament in 1757. Its duties are analogous to those performed by the levies formerly made under commissions of array; and it is governed by martial law, in accordance with provisions laid down in the various militia acts.

It is not, perhaps, a question of much importance whether the prerogative of the crown, which was specially saved by the earlier mutiny acts, to give and enforce martial law in places beyond sea, is still effectual. It has not been abrogated by any statutes, and it would seem to survive and be recognised in some of the clauses of the Mutiny Act. Within the United Kingdom, however, and for the government of troops sanctioned by parliament, no matter where serving, martial law exists only by virtue of the Mutiny Act and the Articles of War; and the effect of a proclamation of martial

law, which, in the United Kingdom at least, is illegal without the consent of parliament, is to place all persons in the same position as if they were included in the Mutiny Act.

By the Mutiny Act, power is given to the crown to establish martial law, and to convene courts-martial within the realm and its foreign possessions, for the purpose of punishing offenders against the act and the Articles of War authorised by it. Annual warrants are accordingly sent to the officers commanding at home and abroad, authorising them to convene courts-martial, and to depute their power to any officer under their command, for the trial of offences; provided that the officer so authorised be not under the degree of a field-officer, except in detached situations beyond sea, where a field-officer may not be in command, and then a captain may be authorised.

A general court-martial must consist of not less than thirteen commissioned officers. It can sentence any officer or soldier to suffer death, penal servitude, imprisonment, forfeiture of pay, or pension, or any other punishment which shall accord with the usage of the service; but a sentence of death must be concurred in by at least two-thirds of the officers present.

A district or garrison court-martial must consist of not less than seven commissioned officers. It cannot try a commissioned officer, but it has the same power over a soldier as a general court-martial, except that it cannot condemn to death or penal servitude.

A regimental or detachment court-martial must consist, if possible, of five commissioned officers, but three are enough. It can sentence a soldier to corporal punishment, or to imprisonment, and to forfeiture of pay.

Where it may be found impracticable, in places beyond sea, to assemble a general court-martial, and offences of which such a court has cognizance have been committed, the officer commanding may convene a Detachment General Court-martial, to consist of not less than three commissioned officers, for the trial of the offenders; and the court will have like powers to those given by the act to general courts-martial. The general in command must approve and confirm the sentence.

Crimes punishable with death are enumerated in the act; and power is given to commute the sentence of death to one of penal servitude or imprisonment. Power is also given to inflict corporal punishment, with or without imprisonment, to commute the same for imprisonment, and to brand deserters. No one convicted or acquitted by the civil power is to be tried by court-martial for the same offence. Soldiers are not liable to be taken out of the service, except for felony, misdemeanour, or debts above thirty pounds.

The Articles of War declare certain military duties, and provide punishment for various crimes, as perjury, mutiny, desertion, absence without leave, offences in the field, camp, garrison, or quarters, drunkenness, disgraceful conduct, and some others. They lay down certain regulations for the guidance of courts-martial, and provide for the admixture on such courts of officers belonging to different branches of the service.

The president of the court is the senior combatant officer: he must not be the confirming officer. Officers of an inferior rank are not to try one of a higher rank: the trying officers are to be

equals or superiors of the prisoner. No court-martial can be held by the military on board a man-of-war, the land forces being then under naval discipline, as prescribed by orders issued from the Admiralty.

The navy is not governed by the annual Mutiny Act, but by permanent statutes, of which 22 Geo. II. c. 33 is the chief. This act declares the Articles of the Navy, which are comprehensive and very stringent. They specify the cases in which death may be awarded, and end by saying that 'all other crimes, not capital, committed by any person or persons in the fleet, which are not mentioned in this act, or for which no punishment is hereby directed to be inflicted, shall be punished according to the laws and customs in such cases used at sea.'

The navy, besides being the natural defence of England from foreigners, and therefore ever to be kept up, could not become dangerous to the liberties of the country; but experience proved that this was not so with an army, and therefore it was that our ancestors, in their wisdom, 'out of the nettle danger plucked the flower safety,' by simply providing that without their consent, annually to be asked, a standing army could have no legal existence in England.

To proclaim martial law generally in the United Kingdom, the sanction of parliament is required; and though it is a question whether in the colonies the crown may not of its ancient prerogative proclaim martial law at discretion, in practice the safer way, and the way commonly adopted when such proclamations are made, is to get from the local legislature an Act of Indemnity, authorising retrospectively the establishment of martial law.

L. B. C.

THOSE composers of waltzes have a great deal to answer for. One can stand any amount of quadrille, which only serves to drown soft insinuations, and make flirtation difficult; the moribund but tenacious polka raises the spirits, and tarantularises the legs, but penetrates not to the heart; the stirring galop sends the dance-maniac into a paroxysm of insane emulation of the solar system, tops, impaled cockchafers, and everything else which is rotatory, and acts as a powerful sudorific upon the skin; but Love cannot go the pace with it. It is the melancholy, dreamy, romantic, and yet intoxicating waltz which plays the mischief with the susceptible bachelor. It is as tantalising, in a Terpsichorean sense, as any other dance-music, if not more so; but besides this harmless physical effect upon the nerves, it exercises a subtle æsthetic influence over the soul, which is alone sufficient to establish its German origin. I speak not of the original *trois-temps*, or of those barrel-organ arrangements which are founded upon popular comic airs, but of the legitimate *deux-temps* waltz; the Olga, the Prima Donna, the Faust, the Guards, the dangerous characteristic of all which is an under-current of some long drawn-out note, perceptible through every turn and twist of the air.

Knowing nothing of the theory of music, I cannot explain my meaning properly, but fellow-sufferers will understand me. The violin and violoncello have this particular advantage over other instruments, that when the player gets hold of the chord which vibrates all up one's backbone, he can dwell upon it for any amount of time, keeping up the vibration until the whole body and soul of the

listener is saturated with the music, and drawing tears from eyes which are not easily suffused. The organ, it is true, also affects you by the prolongation of its notes, but the organ is a solemn affair, and I am thinking of dance-music. The piano, on the other hand, pleases you by its brilliancy, by a constant succession of pleasant sounds, gushing out like jets from a fountain. But a waltz played on the piano, without either a violin or cornet-a-piston accompaniment, is a waltz with its fangs drawn; for the piano cannot sustain those long-drawn notes which turn your heart into water, and make you feel inclined to pour out the solution at your partner's feet.

Ah me, the years that have fled! And yet how vividly I can recall the sixth dance of the first ball of the season of 18—! When Weippart's band played the opening bars of the *Valse d'Amour*, I had no need to look at my card; the name of Cousin Ellen was engraved too deeply on my heart for that. I found her sitting behind the door, in the ice-room, talking to Carroll the barrister. She jumped up with alacrity. 'Here you are at last!' she cried, taking my arm; 'now I shall enjoy my first dance to-night.'

'Why,' said I, 'you have had three, for you came in time for the second, and have not sat out once.'

'Oh, that polka with Captain Moore was a perfect penance—he cannot keep step at all; and as for walking through the last quadrille with Mr Carroll, I do not call that dancing. But I never enjoy waltzing with any one so much as with you, Bob; it is the one thing you can do to perfection. Every one has his or her speciality, you know, and dancing is yours.'

'Ah,' said I, as the fumes of the music enveloped me, 'I can remember when we were children, and used to dance at Christmas-parties!'

'Yes, and what a bore you used to think it!'

'True, I was stupid and idiotic enough for that; I never liked dancing till I was about seventeen. But I always loved you, Ellen.' Here I gave her hand a gentle squeeze, and it is my firm impression that— But no, not on the rack would I divulge it. Let me suffer, and be strong. 'Do you remember that you promised to be my little wife?'

'Did I? How foolish children are!'

'How delightful it would be' (I denounce the composer of the *Valse d'Amour* as the person who forced me to say all this) 'if such a childish day-dream were to prove some day a waking reality!'

Ellen was out of breath, and uttered no reply with her tongue, but the gipsy made a most nefarious use of her eyes. Ah, if young ladies knew the effect they produce by glancing softly up at their partners in a languishing waltz, and then looking down immediately on the ground, they would not do it: or perhaps they would do it all the more; there is no trusting them. The waltz came to an end, but its effects did not cease all at once, and Bob was by no means himself again in consequence.

'I must make the most of this ball, for we are not to remain in London long, and I shall not have many this summer,' said Ellen as we promenaded.

'What!' I exclaimed in a tone of disappointment, for the words were like lumps of ice dropped down the back.

'Papa has taken a house on the banks of the

Thames, at Longreach. It is delightful; there is a lawn sloping down to the river, and a boat-house. You used to row when you were up at the university, did you not?' 'A little.'

'That is delightful. You must come and stay whenever you can, and take an oar. Papa has gone wild on aquatics.'

I went down to Longreach, when the Martins were settled in their new house, on a Saturday to Monday visit, and found everything unexpectedly delightful. Uncle William, who was accustomed to dwell upon the insignificance of my patrimony, and the improbability of my ever making an income out of my ink-pot, whenever I met him, never alluded to those chilling topics; Aunt Maria substituted her pleasant cordial face for the ordinary cold-shoulder with which she treated me; Dick, the hope of the family, was less mischievous, now that he had left Eton, and commenced cramming for the army; and as for the girls, their behaviour was cousinly and comfortable as always.

Eden had one snake, and that wore the likeness of Carroll, who came to dinner on the Sunday in a very free-and-easy sort of way; that is, upon a general, not a special invitation.

After due reflection upon the state of things, I formed the following conclusions: That the Martin family saw that my early friendship for Cousin Nelly had become transmogrified into love; that my uncle and aunt had at length perceived my many merits, and were no longer inclined to discountenance my attentions to their daughter; that the sentiments of Ellen herself coincided with those of her parents upon this interesting subject; but that Carroll was a rival, and must be watched. I made a master-move. Carroll was nailed by his business to London, and had but slight casual instant visits to the Martins, while I was constant there, free, and my presence welcomed. So I knew that the heat of my chambers would be with me, and I took bachelor lodgings in Longreach.

'Have you come into the country for a spell, Bob?' said my uncle, when he first learned the fact. 'That is right; your new novel will be all the fresher for it. You must join the L. B. C. I will put you up to-night, and Thwarts shall second you. Thwarts is our Hon. Sec.'

'Proud and happy I am sure,' I lied. 'What is the L. B. C., though?'

'Why, the Longreach Boating Club, to be sure.'

'Well, I will pay my subscription, of course; but I do not know enough about rowing to be a very active member.'

'O come!' said my uncle; 'that will not do. I know better than that.'

That evening, I was unanimously elected into the L. B. C., and introduced to the members at a cold supper, which my uncle gave at his own house; for his meals had got all queer and straggling since he had appeared in the character of a jolly middle-aged waterman; and lunch was a kind of dinner, taken at irregular hours, and tea seemed to be going on all the afternoon and evening; while the only real and comfortable repast was taken when it was dark, and no more boating could be done till the morrow.

'You will be a great accession to our club,' said Mr Thwarts to me: 'you used to pull at Cambridge, I believe.'

'Not much,' I replied. 'Of course I subscribed to the college-boat, but I never rowed in it. My

boating has been entirely confined to pottering about with a cigar in my mouth. I never got hot over it in my life.'

'O Bob!' cried Nelly, 'when you won that handsome cup!' The handsome cup was a pewter pot with a glass bottom, and the college arms engraved upon it, underneath which were inscribed the names of four victorious oarsmen and their cockswain, and I was handed down to posterity as a successful No. 3.

The pot was a swindle: we only got two boats to enter for the college scratch fours that year, and as the day fixed for the race was a wet one, we tossed who should be supposed to have won.

Alas! I had yielded to the promptings of vanity, and displayed the mendacious trophy to my aunt and cousins when they came to lunch at my chambers one day, in the course of a shopping carnival; and as I had suppressed the details of the race, they had gone away firmly impressed with the idea that I was fit to row for the championship of the Thames. I now told the real story, which was received with shouts of incredulous laughter.

'The invention of similar anecdotes is his professional pursuit,' said my uncle in explanation.

'But this is a fact, I assure you,' I cried.

'Oh, of course,' said my uncle. 'But the next time you tell it, Bob, take my advice, and season it with a little fiction, to make it sound more probable.'

'I am sorry to press you to row, if you do not like it,' said Thwarts; 'but we have accepted a challenge from the Dedwater Rowing Club, and can only get seven oars together. Mr Martin must row, if you will not.'

'Yes,' cried my uncle; 'and I can hardly pull my weight; besides which, the training would kill me; so, if you persist in your refusal, Bob, you will be guilty of avunculicide.'

'Dear papa!' said Ellen pathetically. 'Oh! cousin Bob! What could a poor fellow do but yield?' I yielded. When I called on the following morning, I found that Ellen was out shopping with her mother, so I took two of the younger girls out on the water; for I enjoyed aquatic exercise when taken in a rational manner—I lolling on the cushions in the stern of the boat, and they rowing me about.

'Who is this Mr Thwarts?' I asked, thinking to extract information from Jenny, an observant puss of fifteen.

'Mr Thwarts is a very great man,' said Jenny; 'he owns everything and everybody nearly about here, and is ever so rich. And he is a magistrate, and could be a member of parliament if he wished, only he prefers boating; and he likes Nelly, and papa and mamma are glad of it.'

'And does Nelly like him?'

'I don't think she does much,' said Jenny, resting on her oar, and looking mysterious—'at least, not in the way you mean. But you must not tell I said so!'

I vowed secrecy, and meditated. Carroll, then, was not the man I had to fear, but Thwarts, and I made up my mind to thwart him. Only I could not do it; on the contrary, he thwarted me—that is, he made me row No. 5 in an eight-oar against my will. I had always pitied galley-slaves with a theoretical pity, but now I sympathised with them from my soul.

Never shall I forget my first 'spin' up the river. It was all very well at first, while we paddled

easily along with a slow and lingering stroke, though even then the cockswain's remarks were unpleasant, while he addressed me as 'No. 5,' as if I had really been a prisoner at Brest.

'Time, No. 5!' 'More forward, No. 5!' 'Don't pull so much with your arms, No. 5!'

As if any one but Miss Biffin could pull with the legs! But after a while Thwarts began to quicken his stroke, and the effects were most unpleasant; I broke out in a violent perspiration, I got out of breath, my hands felt as though they had received the punishment of the cane, and the remembrance was vividly enforced upon me that that scholastic instrument of torture is sometimes otherwise applied; for those nice-looking white rugs which are tied on the seats of boats are delusions and snares, especially when they wriggle round in such a manner that the knots come uppermost.

At the expiration of five minutes, which seemed like fifty, I cried out 'Stop!'

'Easy all!' said the cockswain.

'What is the matter?' asked Thwarts.

'The matter is, that I am composed of flesh and blood, not iron and brass,' I gasped; 'that I am a man, and not a steam-engine of forty horsepower.'

'Ah, you are out of condition,' said Thwarts. 'A week's training will bring you up to the mark. However, we will take it easy to-day. Paddle on all!'

So I paddled on in silence, but I formed an inward resolution, which I broached to Nelly that very evening.

'Well,' said she, as I put a gentle on the line with which she was angling at the bottom of the garden, 'how does the boat go?'

'Bother the boat!' cried I. 'Look there!' And I exhibited my hands, which were covered with large white bladders.

'Oh, that is nothing,' said she. 'I despise a man who has no blisters.'

'Indeed? Then I shall be sorry to incur your scorn, but I mean to fit myself for it as soon as possible. I will not row any more.'

'O Bob, when papa has set his heart on our beating the Dedwaters, and we cannot make up the eight without you; how unkind!'

'You are very warm about this boat-race,' said I sarcastically.

'I am,' she replied; 'I shall be so disappointed if you do not row.'

'Yes, because you wish to please this Thwarts. But I have no reason for currying favour with the fellow. Hang Thwarts!'

'With all my heart; after the match.'

'You little humbug!' cried I. 'I know all about it!'

'What! are you too against me?' she said, pouting. 'I thought I had one friend in dear old Bob!'

'What! you do not wish to have him then?'

She shook her head.

'Honour bright!'

She nodded.

'Why do you wish me to make a water-martyr of myself, then?'

'Because I want to beat that horrid D. R. C. Besides, I have a reason. Do not ask me what; I will tell you some day.'

After much solitary self-communing, I now came to the conclusion that my former speculations as to the state of affairs were all wrong; that

uncle and aunt Martin had settled the match between Ellen and Thwarts in their own minds, and were cordial to me because I was no longer, in their estimation, dangerous as a lover, though as a familiar cousin I might act as a spur to the hesitating lover's intent; that Ellen, though not liking to run counter to her parents' wishes, much preferred myself, and that she urged me to remain in the Longreach eight to keep me near her.

I longed to put an end to my doubts and anxieties by a formal offer of marriage, and had often tried to do so. But I had been making love to her in a jocular manner ever since I was twelve and she ten years of age, and she persisted in taking everything I said in fun. Still, I thought my chances looked so well, that I obeyed her wishes, and remained one of the crew of the L. B. C.

'Have you begun training yet?' asked Thwarts, when we met at the boat-house next day.

'No,' said I. 'Is it really necessary?'

'Of course it is. No man can last over a mile-course unless he is in training. And after all, what is it? A healthy life of moderation, temperance, and exercise in the open air for six weeks, which will be of the greatest possible advantage to your constitution, besides clearing your brain after the hard work you must have been giving it lately. By the by, what a capital story your last novel is.'

In an evil hour, and totally ignorant of what was before me, I allowed myself to be cajoled, and promised to enter upon a course of training the very next day. My uncle was delighted; Ellen smiled approbation and gratitude; and my seven fellow-sufferers declared that I was a thorough good-fellow; and as at that time I was still foolish enough to care for the praise or blame of my fellow-creatures, I rejoiced in their applause, and went to an early couch, soothed by the consciousness of virtue.

I always sleep in summer with my bedroom window open, a practice which was peculiarly pleasant in my Longreach lodgings, because of the honeysuckle and jessamine which grew luxuriantly over the verandah immediately beneath, allowing fragrant sprays to straggle through the casement. There was a nightingale, too, who made a practice of serenading me from an opposite tree, and whose song on this particular night was particularly soothing and brilliant, though it must have been after I had dropped off to sleep that he adapted human words to his melody, and treated me to—

Oh! had you ever a cousin, Tom?

Did that cousin happen to sing?

Of sisters you've got a round dozen, Tom,

But a cousin's a different thing.

Doubtless I dreamed that, for my sleep was profusely illustrated, and dissolving views chased each other across my retina with the rapidity of the 'Scenes from the Holy Land' upon the white sheet at the Polytechnic; and all my visions that night were of a pleasing nature, especially the last, which represented an eight-oar skimming over a smooth sea, with a bride crowned with orange blossoms, and a bridegroom attired in white ducks and a straw hat, reposing luxuriously in the stern. I was that comfortable bridegroom, and Cousin Nelly was—

'Hulloa! not up yet!' roared a voice of thunder, which brought me from a horizontal to a sitting

posture with an electric start; and on looking in the direction from which the sounds proceeded, I saw with horror a man's head and shoulders protruded through the window.

'Go away!' I cried. 'I will call the police! I will shoot you! I have a revolver under the pillow.'

'Have you, though? That cannot be permitted till after the race, for you might meet with an accident.'

'Thwarts!' I cried, recognising him. 'How did you ever get there?'

'Climbed up the verandah, of course,' he replied. 'I could not wake you by shouting and throwing stones from below. But come, are you going to lie in bed all day? It is nearly seven o'clock.'

'What! in the evening?' I cried, springing out.

'No, no, of course not; seven A.M. to be sure.'

'Then in another three hours I will talk to you; but my constitution will not stand night-work,' said I.

'Nonsense,' replied Thwarts, introducing the whole of himself into my desecrated bower. 'You have promised to train like the rest of us, and our rule is to meet at the Angler's Joy at a quarter past seven; bathe, just a header, and out again; run from the Willows to the Rushes, which is a measured mile; cool down, and dress, and then breakfast together at the inn. Disperse till twelve, then take a short row, returning to dinner at two. Dine together, and separate till five, when we take a good spell up the river, returning to supper at eight, and turning in at ten sharp.'

'We take all our meals together at the Angler's Joy, then?' I remarked.

'Yes,' said Thwarts, 'or some of us would be tempted to eat unlawful food. But come, look sharp; you had better do your washing and shaving after your mile run, and then you will be comfortable for breakfast. A jump in the river will do for the present.'

Being in for it, I thought I would go through with it, and yielded myself up like a lamb. We found our six fellow-victims gathered at the Angler's Joy, and I rejoiced to see that they one and all looked surly: they were good-tempered fellows, as your brawny, strong-armed men for the most part providentially are; but to be torn out of bed in the middle of the night, and told to jump into a river, is trying to the most amiable disposition.

That somewhat dreaded plunge, however, was in reality very pleasant, and made one feel as fresh and active as a lark; sensations which were too soon obliterated.

'You need not take so much trouble to dry yourself,' said Thwarts to me; 'you will not take cold if you go in and have a rub down directly after your run.' And he started off at a round trot, an example which, one after the other, we all followed. Some ran the whole mile; others, as it was the first day of regular training, only half that distance; while I had to stop at the end of about three hundred yards, blowing like a grampus. However, with many rests, and sitting down at frequent intervals, I managed to come in a very bad eighth, and then I retired to my lodgings, and made myself comfortable for the breakfast, for which I felt very great need.

'How stale the bread is!' cried I. 'I hate stale bread.'

'Of course the bread is stale!' was the reply.

'New bread is the worst thing possible for the wind.'

'There is no tea!'

'Tea! It is poison. You may have a pint of small-beer.'

'How dreadfully underdone these chops are!'

'Not a bit; the gravy is the nutritious part.'

However, extreme exhaustion enabled me to make an unpalatable meal, and then I drew forth my pipe.

'What is that?' cried Thwarts. 'My dear fellow, you must not smoke at this time of day. One pipe after supper is all we allow, and even that has for the wind.'

'But,' cried I in dismay, 'my allowance is half a pound of shag and a quarter of a box of cigars a week!'

'So is mine, quite that,' murmured No. 2.

'And mine!' said Bow.

'One pipe after breakfast could never hurt,' added No. 4.

I had very nearly excited a mutiny; but Thwarts talked his crew over, consoling them with the reflection that their abstinence was only to be for six weeks, at the expiration of which time they might smoke another penny off the income-tax, if they liked.

Having my pipe put out was not the worst part of the business. I must confess that I do like my dinner, and am accustomed to look forward to it with considerable cheerfulness, and now that I had a ravenous appetite, which I could not remember being blest with since the happy days of childhood, I was obliged to squander it upon disgusting raw beef-steaks and vulgar malt liquor, and any secret infringement of the rules laid down for our guidance, produced a sensation as if the heart was bursting when we 'put it on' during the evening's spin up the river.

Well, my 'wind' certainly improved, and my muscles grew more powerful; but my unfortunate hands became completely flayed, so that I had to row in gloves, and I was obliged to have my flannel trousers thickly padded, so that the joys of training did not grow upon me, as I had been assured they would after the first; on the contrary, I marked off the six weeks on my almanac, and scratched out every day as it passed with the eagerness of a school-boy watching the approach of the holidays. And oh! how I enjoyed the Sundays.

One thing fairly puzzled me, and that was the great interest which Carroll the barrister suddenly took in the L. B. C. eight in general, and my unworthy self in particular. I had known him, it was true, from boyhood, but of late years we had only seen each other occasionally, our paths of life being diverse. Why, then, did he come bustling up to Longreach and calling at my lodgings five days in the week? What made him so hostile to the inoffensive Dedwaters, that he out-uncled my uncle in his desire that we should humble their pride, or, as he inelegantly expressed himself, 'should take the shine out of them?' To what could his anxiety lest I should 'overdo it,' and the cunning ointments he provided for my abrasions, be ascribed? Did he conclude that we were both unsuccessful lovers, and had he a sympathy for me, the result of our common misfortune? Did he wish to prove, by taking an interest in the success of Thwarts's boat, that he had not been cut out by that landed

young man, but had merely felt a friendship for Ellen, which was in nowise affected by her engagement to another?

I observed one evening, after he had run on the bank for upwards of three miles, coaching us, that he was very disinterested.

'Not exactly,' he replied. 'One of the Dedwater crew offered three to one on his boat at the club a fortnight ago, and as I liked the style in which you went the day before, when I happened to see you, I took him.'

'To any amount?'

'In hundreds.'

This, certainly, was some slight explanation of his interest, for a hundred pounds is a nasty sum to lose, and three hundred a nice sum to win, for a professional man.

At the end of three weeks' training, I had an eruption of boils, which were very painful, and exceedingly disagreeable. But when I sought for pity, I was told that it was all right, and they would do me all the good in nature. I also observed that Carroll was not welcome to my uncle and aunt, in spite of his aquatic enthusiasm. Ha! was he still to be feared? No, no; Ellen could never inflict all this misery upon a poor wretch, even if he were a cousin, without intending to recompense him. Still, I was uneasy in mind; as for my body, all ease had departed from that weeks before.

The day of the match drew near, but I did not dread it; on the contrary, had it been a duel or a battle, I should have hailed the event which put an end to the preparation. I have heard that soldiers who have been investing a town for some time are madly impatient for the assault, preferring the most forlorn-hope of not being blown up, skewered, or chopped down, to the certainty of work in the trenches; and I can easily understand it.

What puzzles me more is, that when the day actually arrived, and the hostile boat made its appearance, and the river was covered with gay barges, and the lawns on the bank with tents and ladies, I actually caught the infection which I had escaped during the whole six weeks' training, and became absurdly anxious to win. I could have punched the heads of those Dedwater fellows; I rejoiced to observe that one of them had a slight cold, and that another seemed weak about the loins. More; as the time approached, I grew so excited, that I staked money, ay, as much as I could earn in three months with this pen, on our boat! It was temporary insanity.

My uncle's preparations for celebrating the regatta were grand. Both the crews were to dine with him afterwards, and the festivities were to terminate in a ball, held in a large marquee erected on the lawn; and the trees of the garden were profusely hung with little coloured lamps, to give a fairy-like effect to the scene.

Of the race, I cannot tell you much. I can remember paddling up to the starting-place, and a man in a ten-oared waterman's boat saying: 'Are you ready? Go!' But immediately after that I lost consciousness of everything except that my frame was bursting, splitting, blowing up, and coming to pieces generally; that the idea of surviving was absurd, but that it did not much matter; and that I hoped for speedy dissolution, or some other termination of the race. Just as I was perfectly convinced that I had only two seconds

more to live, there was a tremendous shouting, and the cockswain (oh, how I loathed that little man!) yelled out: 'Now, then, come away! We're ahead! Six strokes more with a will, and we can't lose! Hurrah!' And I just roused myself for a final effort, which lasted, not for six strokes, but at least for twenty, and rolled backwards upon No. 4. But it did not matter; the L. B. C. had won.

I had earned any amount of praise, and as much reward as I could get, from Ellen; I had won my money; I could eat, drink, and smoke what and how much I chose. The training was over! In spite of exhaustion, that idea was delicious!

So was my uncle's dinner; heaps of good things, and nothing interdicted! Even Ellen's ingratitude could not spoil my appetite, and I put it to any one whether she was good.

'Well, Nelly,' I cried, on first seeing her after the race, 'we have won, you see.'

'So I suppose,' she replied listlessly.

'Are you not glad?'

'Glad? O yes, of course. Very nice, wasn't it?'

'I tell you what, Ellen,' said I, 'if you had only spoken in that tone before, you would have saved me the most unpleasant six weeks I ever spent in my life.'

'Poor old Bob!' she cried; 'I am really very glad; only I have a headache, and am so stupid.'

'I hope you will be all right to-night,' said I, as she went off.

'What do you mean, Bob?' said she, stopping short, and turning pale.

'Why, for the ball, of course.'

'O yes, to be sure,' she cried with a laugh, 'the ball! I told you I was stupid to-day.'

I repeat that I intensely enjoyed my dinner, but for the dancing afterwards I had no great mind: I was stiff, I was sore, and I had long arrears of tobacco to pull up. There was a delightful amount of freedom and ease about the party; those who liked, stopped in the tent and danced, those who preferred it wandered about the grounds; it was of little use to engage partners beforehand, and none at all to hunt for them if they were not in the marquee when the band struck up. I took advantage of this state of things, and withdrew to a quiet nook I knew of under a willow which overhung the river, settled myself comfortably, and filled my largest meerschaum.

With lights and music at some little distance behind me, a comfortable quantum of claret inside me, and the dark-flowing river before me, time passed rapidly, and I had sat smoking and idly dreaming of past trials and future hopes, the latter all connected with my pretty cousin, for upwards of an hour, when my attention was drawn to an object on the water, which, as my eyes had become accustomed to the darkness, I soon made out to be a wherry, stealthily approaching the spot where I sat. It might be only some uninvited neighbour, enjoying the freshness of the air and the music, but it was a late hour for indulging such a fancy, and my curiosity was excited. Nor was it diminished when the boat stole quietly under the willow, and was made fast to the bank; nor when a female figure, enveloped in a voluminous shawl, and carrying a large carpet-bag, came hurriedly along the path; nor when a man leaped from the boat, and took the carpet-bag aforesaid from her hand.

A keen pang of suspicion and jealousy shot

through my heart, as I rose and approached the pair, to their evident alarm.

'It is only Bob!' said the voice of Nelly presently. 'O Bob, how you frightened me!'

'Are you going for a row?' I asked with desperate calmness.

'Yes. Don't say anything about it; there is a good boy.'

'May I ask who with?' I could not help saying.

'With me, Carroll, to be sure!' said the voice of that hateful barrister. 'Why, you must have seen how the land lay, surely, old fellow. We are sorry to have to take this step; but Mr Martin is so determined that Ellen shall be thrown away upon that fellow Thwarta, that there is nothing else to be done. Let me take this opportunity of thanking you sincerely for falling into our plans, and going in for this race, to give me an opportunity of perpetually coming down here on the pretence of coaching you, and seeing how the boat was getting on. The three hundred pounds, too, will be most useful for preliminary expenses. But we must be off. Good-bye.'

'Good-bye, dear Bob,' said Nelly, holding out her hand.

I made a violent effort to put a good face on the matter; and after having been so egregiously duped all along, I had to put the final touch by helping them into the boat and shoving them off, and in doing this I nearly fell into the water, and had to grasp a handful of drooping twigs to recover my balance.

The boat vanished into the night, and when I turned from the spot with a heavy heart, I found a bough of willow in my hand.

'Pshaw!' cried I, throwing it away.

There was a terrible disturbance when the elopement was known, but the Martins forgave the couple in a few weeks; and when all turned out well, and Carroll's position at the bar became more and more established, my uncle was even jocular on the subject.

'Ah!' said he, at a certain christening dinner, 'those barristers are such imposing fellows; give them an inch, and they will take a Nell!'

It is all very well for him to joke; but I shall marry for money.

ONE OF THE FAMILY.

FROM a very early period, the welfare and daily life of the apprentice appear to have received serious consideration, not only in the local legislative assemblies, but also in the national one. So far back as the reign of Richard II., bills with reference to him were enacted. An act of the year 1388 ordained that he or she 'which use to labour' at the plough or cart till 'they be of the age of twelve,' should continue at that labour afterwards, and were not to be apprenticed to any 'mystery.' This bill, however, must have been generally evaded, for the preamble of an act of 7 Henry IV. stated that there was a great scarcity of agricultural labourers, by reason of people who were influenced by 'the pride of clothing or other evil customs,' apprenticing their children to trades; and went on to enact, that only those individuals who had not less than twenty shillings per annum in freehold land or rent should put their children out apprentices to handicrafts,

although any persons might put their children 'to take learning at any manner of school that pleaseth him.' This act, however, did not refer to the city of London, as a later act explained, every person in the city 'not of villain state or condition' being privileged to put his sons or daughters apprentice to the freemen. In the year 1483, it was enacted that aliens were not to take for apprentices any save those who were English-born, except their own sons or daughters—*sinon il soit son fils ou sa fille*. Again, in 1523, it was ordained that 'no man or stranger borne out of the kynges obeysaunce, he he denisen or not denisen,' was to take any apprentices save those who were natives of England. Another bill of 1535 enacted that companies or guilds should take only two shillings and sixpence fee for the entry of an apprentice, and three shillings and fourpence when the apprentice had served his time.

The celebrated statute of Elizabeth 'touching dyvers orders for artyficers,' contained several provisos having reference to apprentices. Husbandmen 'using half a ploughlande at the least in tillage,' might take one apprentice of between twelve and eighteen years of age, to serve until he was twenty-one or twenty-four years old. Merchants in cities and corporate towns 'traffequing by trafique or trade into any p'tes beyond the sea,' were prohibited from taking apprentices whose fathers and mothers had not land or houses of the clear yearly value of forty shillings. Tradesmen in market-towns were permitted to have two apprentices, but they were not to be sons of labourers or husbandmen. The last restriction was enforced also in the case of weavers of woollen cloth, excepting those who dwelt in towns; but twenty-one trades were left open to the children of the tillers of the soil. The same act prohibited persons from exercising any 'arte, misterie, or mannual occupacon,' unless they had served seven years' apprenticeship.

The master in several trades was to employ one journeyman to every three apprentices. Any person under the age of twenty-one years refusing to become an apprentice, was to be committed 'unto ward, there to remayne untill he be contented, and will be bounden to serve as an apprentice should serve.' This act did not refer to the city of Norwich, which had special privileges. Another act of the same date authorised 'every householder using and exercising the trade of the sea by fishing or otherwise,' to take apprentices only seven years old. Perhaps, however, of all the acts of parliament with reference to apprentices, one of the year 1609 is the most creditable to the sense of the parliament. Its preamble stated that there was 'alredye greates somes of money freely given, and more in tyme to come lyke to be given by dyvers well-disposed persons,' unto corporations, to bind apprentices of both sexes 'in trades and mannual occupacions very p'fible in the comon-welth, and acceptable and pleasing unto Almightie God;' and the bill enacted that corporations were to apprentice poor children who were under fifteen years of age, the master being bound in sufficient sureties to return the money at the expiration of the term of apprenticeship. A bequest of this nature was made to the corporation of Preston, but about a year ago that body diverted it from its original purpose, giving it as a grammar-school scholarship. In the year 1703, it was ordained, in order to give 'due encouragement to

such of the youth of this kingdom as shall voluntarily betake themselves to the sea and practice of navigation, justices of the peace were empowered to apprentice poor lads and young vagrants to masters of ships, the churchwardens of the parish having to pay the master fifty shillings for the lad's outfit, and also to conduct him to the port from whence his ship was to sail.

During all this lapse of years, it must not be supposed that the local legislators in corporations, companies, and guilds were neglectful of the apprentice; on the contrary, they who saw more and knew more of him, legislated much in his behoof. Perhaps one of their wisest ordinances was that by which they compelled the father of an illegitimate child to pay to the corporate authorities a sum of money with which to defray the expenses of its apprenticeship. An old deed of this class, dated 1592, provides for the maintenance of the apprentice until he was twenty-four years of age, the master being held liable for his 'keep in time of sickness, if it shall please God to lay such visitation upon him,' and orders that his employers shall find him in food, and 'for labouring days and the Sabbath two shirts.' At the conclusion of twelve years' service, the servant was to receive a reward of twenty shillings, 'unless there is fault at the end of the time.' Some children were thus apprenticed to husbandry, or the 'arte of good housewifery after the best manner;' and there are references to two lads, one of whom was apprenticed to 'a gentleman,' and the other to a 'musician.' The companies and guilds, in legislating for the protection of their own interests, could not avoid enactments bearing upon apprenticeship. Many, however, of their laws with reference to the apprentice appear to have been the result of the absurd jealousy with which 'foreigners'—a comprehensive term, including even inhabitants of neighbouring towns—were regarded. So far back as 1413, the mayor and commonalty of Norwich prohibited foreigners from taking any more apprentices until they had purchased their freedom, 'except their own or their wife's children.' In one borough alone, no less than ten companies enacted that 'no Scotsman born' should be taken apprentice, 'or suffered to work within the town,' one company classing them with Dutchmen, who were equally debarred; and a company of weavers ordained, that if any member called another a Scot 'in malice,' he was to forfeit six and eightpence. This foolish feeling, however, appears to have died out, or to have faded before the intensity of the antipathy with which members of the Society of Friends were regarded, for a later guild ordinance enacted that the children of Quakers were not to be taken apprentice under pain of a penalty of one hundred pounds.

We have it on the authority of Chaucer that the apprentice was too fond of pleasure:

At every bridle would he sing and hoppe;
He loved bet the tavern than the shoppe;

but a Newcastle eye-witness, writing the by-laws of the Merchant Guild in 1554, gives a terrible account of the embryo merchants. Struck with astonishment, the old scribe writes: 'What dyseing, cardeing, and mumming! what typling, daunseing, and brasing of harlots! what garded cotes, jagged hose lined with silke, and cutt shoes! what use of gyttrenes by nyght! what wearinge of berds! what daggers ys be, them worned crosse overthwarte their

backes, that theeis their dooings are moore cumlye and decent for vageing ruffians than seemlie for honest apprentices.' The guild appears to have been resolved to pass a comprehensive reform bill, for they forbade the apprentices to 'daunse, dyse, carde, or mum;' just as at Galway, twenty-six years previously, gambling was prohibited, 'speciallee by prentisyas nor Irishmen.' They were also prohibited from using 'any gyttrenes,' or to wear any 'cutt hose, cutt shoes, or paunced jerkins, or any berds,' and enjoined to wear 'none other hoses than sloppes of coarse clothe whereof the yard do not exceed 12d.;' and, strange to say, their shoes and their coats were to be 'of the same materiall and housewyfes making.' They were also forbidden to wear any 'strait hose' in place of those 'playn, without cutts, pounsing, or gards.' The apprentices of mayors, sheriffs, and aldermen, however, were not required to dress according to this statute.

The guild appear to have been influenced by the old school copy-book aphorism, 'Evil communications corrupt good manners,' for, in 1554, it was ordained that natives of Tynedale and Tydesdale were not to be taken as apprentices, 'the parties there brought up being known, either by education or nature, not to be of honest conversation.' Even the exclusion of these youths did not improve the morals of the apprentices, and in November 1603, the authorities again forbade them to 'daunse, dice, carde, mum, or use any music, either by nyght or by daye, in the streetes.' The cloth of which their garments was to be fashioned was not to exceed ten shillings a yard, and their 'fustian' was to be under three shillings per yard. The London apprentices, in 1611, were forbidden any material save 'cloth, kersey, fustian, sackcloth, canvas, English leather, or English stuffe' of not more than two shillings and sixpence per yard; and their hats, with band and trimming, were not to cost above five shillings. At Newcastle, the lads were not to wear any velvet or lace, or any 'silke garters, silk or velvet girdles, worsted stockings, silk shoe-strings, 'pumps, pantofles, or cake shoes,' hats lined with velvet, 'nor double cypress hat-bands,' cloaks, daggers, or 'ruffled bands.' They were permitted, however, to wear 'falling bands plaine, without lace, stiche, or any kind of sowed worke;' but, on the other hand, they were expressly cautioned against wearing their hair long, 'nor lockes at the ears like ruffians.' Some idea of the despotic power possessed by these associations may be arrived at, when it is considered that this Merchants' Guild selected a special prison to contain, and appointed its own jailer to look after those courageous youths who dared to disobey the mandates of the magnates.

That there were such brave ones is shewn by many old entries, one of which testifies to the fact, that in the year 1649, when it was enacted that the apprentice was to cut his hair from the 'crown of his head,' that he was to 'keep his forehead bare,' and that 'his lockes (if any) shall not reach below the lap of his eare;' that when he was ill, he was to wear a 'linnen cappe and no other, and that without laice;' that he was not to wear beaver hats 'nor castors;' no gold or silver work, but only black bands to black hats, and suitable bands to gray ones; no 'fancies' or ribbons; no cloth of value exceeding fourteen or fifteen shillings a yard; no 'stuffe of silke or cammel haire;' no trimming to his clothes, 'except buttons, and them only in places needful, and no

better than of silke; no 'boot-hos-tops nor coulloured showes, or showes of Spanish leather or with long nebs; no 'silke garters at all; no gloves other than very plain ones, or shoe-strings of any better material than cotton-ribbon; and no boots, 'only when they ride'—nine apprentices refused to conform. These unruly youths were given a month's time to consider what they were about, and at the expiration of that period only three of them remained firm. These three were brought into court, and made 'exemplary' by having their hair cut on the rural and unartistic fashion of placing a basin upon the head, and cutting the flowing locks in a line with its edge, and also by removing the obnoxious ribbons from their cloaks, after which they were committed to the prison, with an allowance of '2d. in bread,' and a quart of table-beer daily. These severe measures brought them to their senses, and they soon very humbly petitioned the guild to 'passe bye and be oblivious of all misdemeanours.' Both the morality and the religion of the apprentices appear to have received attention. In the year 1656, a guild, after 'much wofull experience,' enacted, that by reason of the abounding of iniquity, and consequent 'great apostasy and falling off from the truth, to all manner of heresy and unheard-of blasphemy and prophaneness,' lads who would not duly accompany their masters to public ordinances of religion, and also those of illegitimate birth, and those who were 'crooked, lame, or any other way deformed,' were not to be taken as apprentices under pain of heavy penalties. In the year 1663, a company enacted that every apprentice guilty of immorality was to be fined one hundred pounds. Prohibited from indulgence in music, dancing, dicing, mumming, and other amusements, the apprentices seem to have directed their attention to 'the fancy;' for, in 1697, they were forbidden to keep 'horses, dogs, or fighting cocks,' until they had served seven out of the ten years for which they were bound. Unfortunately for the good name of England, the apprentices appear to have taken their evil habits abroad with them, for an old order of the Galway corporation, and dated February 25, 1585, said: 'The young English tailours and ther boys' were undoubted 'vavagvaunts' (vagrants?), guilty of 'using all unlawfull pleis and laciuous expenses, both by daye and nighte;' and enjoins upon them the necessity of obtaining an honest livelihood, telling them to abstain from 'pantofles, but rather be content with shoes.'

The apprentice of to-day may, like many of his elders, look back upon the past, and fancy that because masters were forbidden to give their servants salmon above three times during a week, that the apprentice of the misnamed 'good old times' was in an enviable position. Such an idea, however, would be very absurdly erroneous. So recently as the early part of the eighteenth century, Manchester apprentices to the cotton trade, who were, comparatively speaking, young gentlemen, were compelled to perform much manual labour, which to-day is reserved for porters only. The 'cotton lord' himself was at work at five in the morning with his children. Seven o'clock was the hour for breakfast, to which there was no tea and toast, but simply a large dish of oatmeal porridge, around which the 'lord,' his children, and the apprentices grouped themselves with wooden spoons. At a given signal, they plunged their spoons into the mass, dipped the spoonfuls into a bowl of milk

until the dish was empty, upon which they immediately returned to work. If such was the position of the very aristocracy of apprenticeship, what would be the state of the plebeians?

SAND-CASTLES.

I watch in meditative hour,
Upon the glistening sand, the tower
My laughing children rear;
Dear Babel-builders—sturdy Ned,
And rosy Kate, and tiny Fred,
What time the tide draws near.

How earnestly, and with what toil,
The little navigators moil
To build their house of sand.
Digging and dabbling all about,
Napoleon made no greater rout,
Stealing his neighbours' land.

No kings contending for a crown,
No generals battling for a town,
Made such a fuss before;
And fast the mound grows higher still;
With shouts they pile the crumbling hill
Upon the sloping shore.

The old King Canutes from their chairs
Look down upon these petty cares,
And much the work applaud.
Now ramp and bastion are complete;
The mason's work, begun so neat,
Is finished without fraud.

But just then comes an oozing drop,
That filters in, and then the top
Begins to nod and shake;
And now the counterscarp caves in;
And now, its outer walls grown thin,
The sea begins to break.

True type of all the fading hopes
Of kings or grocers, queens or popes.
So crumbled mighty Rome;
And so that bank at Rottemdean
Went all to pieces in '15,
And froze us out at home.

So went that Double First I lost;
Just so my early love was crossed
For pretty Fanny Boyce.
Ambitions, hopes, Time's bitter wave
Washes into the common grave,
That vault for all our joys.

The fragile castle built of sand,
Though raised by many a busy hand,
Soon sinks below the sea.
The sunset comes, and at its heels
Black ballif Night so stealthily steals.
Come, children, into tea.

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